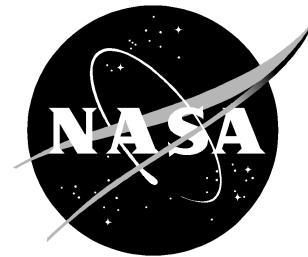


NewsRelease



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The Mars Odyssey Mission: The Long Journey Back to Mars

On October 23, 2001, the Mars Odyssey spacecraft successfully achieved orbital insertion around the red planet. Odyssey's four-year development phase and year of flight operations have closely followed the Webster definition of *odyssey*: "a long journey marked by many changes in fortune."

David Spencer, Mars Odyssey Mission Manager, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif., will speak on "The Mars Odyssey Mission: An Epic Journey Back to the Red Planet" at a colloquium at 2 p.m., Tuesday, March 5, at NASA Langley's H.J.E. Reid Conference Center.

Media Briefing: A media briefing will be held at 1:15 p.m. at the H.J.E. Reid Conference Center, 14 Langley Blvd., at NASA Langley Research Center. Members of the media who wish to attend should contact Kimberly W. Land (757) 864-9885 for credentials.

Spencer will describe the history of the Mars Odyssey project, discuss the fundamental changes that were made in response to the previous mission failures, and provide current mission status. He has been the Mission Manager for the Odyssey project since its formulation in 1997.

Prior to that, he was the lead mission designer for the Mars Pathfinder mission, for which he received the NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal.

Spencer began working at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 1991, after receiving his bachelor's and master's degrees in aeronautics and astronautics from Purdue University.

The general public is invited to the Sigma Series lecture on the same topic at the Virginia Air and Space Center at 7:30 p.m. that evening.

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